ETERNAL SECURITY

By David J. Stewart | March 2009

John 6:37, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

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Introduction

There is no Biblical doctrine today any more controversial than the Eternal Security of the believer. The internet has become extremely popular since the 1990s and many people are seeking for answers in cyberspace. Sadly, there is much misinformation and perversion of the Scriptures on the internet. Hence, I am writing this book in defense of the great Biblical doctrine of Eternal Security. You are welcome to freely share and republish this book, and please do so.

It is the author's hope of this manuscript to convince the reader, using sound Biblical teaching, that **a believer can NEVER lose salvation.** In other words, "Once Saved, Always Saved." I actually prefer the statement, "If Saved, Always Saved," because many professed "Christians" these days have never been saved to begin with. They have been duped by a false gospel. Howbeit, those who are saved are eternally secure in the everlasting arms of their Heavenly Father.

Before entering into the truths found in this book, this author simply asks the reader to bow his head and pray, "Lord, teach me the truth about Eternal Security." May the Lord use this manuscript as a part of His answer to your prayer.

And may I begin this book with sharing the most important truth of all with you, which is THE GOSPEL,

Please share freely!

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Titus 1:2, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."

Chapter 1 — God's Promise Before the World Began

The Apostle Paul (writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) makes an amazing statement in **Titus 1:2, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."** Before God ever spoke the universe into existence, he had already promised eternal life. Before God ever created the first human being, Christ has already been slain in the eternal mind of God. **Revelation 13:8, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."** Notice the words, **"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."** In God's mind, Jesus had been crucified before the world began, which is why God was able to promise eternal life BEFORE the world began.

God in His foreknowledge knew that mankind would choose to go into sin. God created Adam and Eve, knowing fully that they would rebel against His Word. Yet, God loved humanity and made a way of escape before man was even created. Before the first man was ever formed from the dust of the earth, God had already PROMISED eternal life to mankind. Thus, God made a provision, the sacrifice of His only begotten Son, Jesus, to take away the sins of mankind.

We must realize that God does not live in the limitation of time as does humanity. God lives in eternity, where there is no past, present, nor future. This is why the Bible tells us in **2nd Peter 3:8, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."** Whereas mankind is forced to wait and wonder and hope due to the uncertainty of our future; God KNOWS exactly what the future holds, because it is not the future to Him. This is why it is important as Christians that we pray and trust upon the Lord, because He knows the way.

Notice in Titus 1:2 the words **"hope of eternal life."** The word **"hope"** here does not speak in the sense of uncertainty; but rather, in the sense of expectation. Thus, we don't hope that God will give to us eternal life; but

rather, we HAVE A HOPE that God has given to us eternal life. We already have it! Every believer has the blessed assurance of sweet salvation and eternal life. When we pass away from this earthly life as believers, our spirit which is already alive forevermore will simply enter into eternity to be with the Lord. **2nd Corinthians 5:8, "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."**

The Bible does not teach soul sleep. This is clearly taught in **Acts 7:54-59, "When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."** Notice that as Stephen was being martyred, he looked up into Heaven and saw Jesus *standing* on the right hand of the Father. Jesus was welcoming Stephen home, giving him a standing ovation. The Bible says that Stephen said, **"I see the heavens opened."** How much clearer could the Bible be, that departed loved ones who have been saved go to Heaven to be with the Lord? Amen! Stephen saw the Heavens opened and his wonderful and precious Lord waiting to receive him home into glory.

The Bible tells us that eternal life is A PROMISE to the believer! If salvation were by works of self-righteousness, then eternal life would merely be a reward. But salvation is not a reward, it is a free gift from God. If salvation were by religious affiliation, then it would be a privilege. But salvation is not a privilege, it is a free gift from God. If salvation were by nationality, then it would be inherited. But salvation is not an inheritance, it is a free gift from God. **Ephesians 2:8,9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."**

Those who teach that salvation can be lost attempt to nullify and cast doubt upon the PROMISE of God to give eternal life to him that believeth. **John 3:36a, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."** This is God's promise to mankind. God's Law indicts all humanity as guilty sinners. **Romans 3:19, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."** Notice the words, **"all the world may become guilty before God."** We are all guilty sinners. God the Father is the Prosecutor, whose holiness

demands justice and punishment for sin. Jesus Christ came to the Father as our Attorney and offered a plea agreement on our behalf, that we might be pardoned for our crimes against God. Jesus, the holy Lamb of God Who knew no sin, became as sin, that we who knew no righteousness could be made the righteousness of God in Christ. **2nd Corinthians 5:21, "For He** [God the Father] **hath made Him** [God the Son] **to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."** If the proponents of the heresy that salvation can be lost would only accept this Biblical truth, they would cease from attacking the PROMISE of God to save those who simply believe. We are saved by HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, i.e., the righteousness of God which is through faith in Christ Jesus crucified.

Before God ever created the world, He had already made a promise to mankind. That promise was eternal life according to Titus 1:2, which also states that God **"CANNOT LIE."** To say that salvation can be lost renders a believer hopeless, living in constant fear and doubt, wondering if they've sinned too much and have lost their salvation. How tragic! How unbiblical! The very fact that the Bible proclaims the PROMISE of eternal life, is clear evidence that God wants the believer's heart to be comforted and settled concerning salvation. If salvation can be lost, then there is little comfort or assurance of salvation. God wants each believer to have the peaceful assurance of salvation because of what Jesus did for us, and not because of what we're doing for Him.

Let's break down Titus 1:2 to disprove the notion that salvation can be lost:

1. **God has provided ETERNAL LIFE to mankind through the redemptive work of Christ. But God wanted us to have more assurance than that, so He...**
2. **Made us a PROMISE that He'd give to us eternal life through His Son. But God goes further than that to comfort us in our salvation, He...**
3. **Tells us that He made this promise BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN. Even still, God goes further and wants us to be completely comforted in our salvation by telling us...**
4. **GOD CANNOT LIE.**

So we see that God not only has provided eternal life to mankind through the blood sacrifice of His dear Son, Jesus, but has also committed Himself to us in the form of a promise, that He made before we were ever created, and God reminds us that it is IMPOSSIBLE for Him to lie about anything. God went out of His way in Titus 1:2 to comfort our hearts concerning eternal life. If I may paraphrase a bit, God is saying to us, "Look, I have a

plan to redeem you, and by the way, you can hold me to this because I'm making a promise, and by the way, I made this promise before the universe was ever created, and if that's not enough, I absolutely cannot lie. So you can rest assure in your faith in Jesus as the Christ." This is our blessed hope of salvation. We can depend on Jesus that He won't disappoint us for our faith in Him. What a Savior!

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Genesis 9:13, "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth."

Chapter 2 — The Rainbow and Eternal Security

God keeps His promises! God is a promise making and a promise keeping God. The Bible contains literally THOUSANDS of promises from God. Amen! The rainbow is a token that God always keeps His promises, particularly not to destroy the earth again by flood. The Bible tells us in Titus 1:2 that God **"cannot lie."**

One of the promises God makes to mankind is found in **Romans 10:13, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."** The promise is simple. If we call upon the Lord, we will be saved. The word "call" means "to appeal unto," that is, we are to seek salvation in Jesus Christ. Those who come to Jesus to be saved will be.

There is a serious flaw in the teaching that salvation can be lost, in that it makes God a liar and a promise-breaker. There are numerous passages of Scripture which promise Eternal Life unto those who BELIEVE. For example: **John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."** That is a promise from God Almighty!

To say that eternal life can be lost is to call God a liar. There is not one single Scripture in all the Bible that teaches salvation can be lost. Only be wrestling the Scriptures can one come to the erroneous conclusion that salvation can be lost. Yet, we do have clear Scriptural teaching that those who believe on the Lord SHALL BE SAVED. **Acts 10:43, "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth**

in him shall receive remission of sins." Could the Scriptures be any clearer?

When considering the doctrine of Eternal Security, let us begin with the clear and solid teachings of the Word of God, before we entertain the unscriptural and unfounded teachings of men who pervert the Scriptures to satisfy their own self-righteousness. Salvation is of the Lord; and not men. It is our part simply to believe on Jesus Christ to keep His promise to wash our sins away and save us through faith.

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Deuteronomy 33:27, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them."

Chapter 3 — Safe and Secure in the Everlasting Arms

There's a precious Christian hymn based upon Deuteronomy 33:27 titled, "Leaning On The Everlasting Arms," which goes . . .

What a fellowship, what a joy divine,
leaning on the everlasting arms;
what a blessedness, what a peace is mine,
leaning on the everlasting arms.

Refrain:
Leaning, leaning,
safe and secure from all alarms;
leaning, leaning,
leaning on the everlasting arms.

O how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way,
leaning on the everlasting arms;
O how bright the path grows from day to day,
leaning on the everlasting arms.
(Refrain)

What have I to dread, what have I to fear,
leaning on the everlasting arms?
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,
leaning on the everlasting arms.
(Refrain)

Hear song

The Word of God comforts us greatly, giving us strong encouragement, in knowing that God's arms underlie our salvation and are everlasting arms. God's arms never get wearied. God never gets tired. Our salvation is as secure as is God. It is a mistake for those who would rob us of our blessed

assurance of salvation, to ignore such powerful Scriptures as Deuteronomy 33:27.

What good or purpose would there be in the Bible making such a comforting statement as, **"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms,"** if salvation could be lost? Here again we clearly see that salvation is dependent upon God alone. Those who teach that salvation can be lost do not focus upon the everlasting arms of God; but rather, upon the frail, weak and often collapsed arms of men.

Moses (writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in Deuteronomy 33:27), told God's people that they had nothing to fear, because the arms of the eternal God were protecting them. Notice especially **verse 29a, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD."** What wonderful words, **"O people saved by the Lord."** Salvation is of the Lord! The Apostle Paul states in **Galatians 3:26, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."** Amen!

Notice the precious Words in **John 10:28** spoken by our Lord, **"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."** Here again we are reminded of the unwavering promise of God to give eternal life which CANNOT be taken away. Those who believe on Jesus **"shall never perish."**

Notice the words, "**neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."** Notice that the Bible doesn't say "Satan," it says **"men."** Who are these men who would pluck God's children out of His hand? They definitely include those false prophets who teach that salvation can be lost. It is a popular teaching in Charismatic circles still that king David lost his salvation when he sinned with Bathsheba, committing adultery with her, and then having her husband murdered. Although David sinned horribly, and shamefully, David only lost the "joy" of salvation. **Psalm 51:12, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."** Notice that David called eternal life, "THY SALVATION." It is God's salvation. Our part is simply to **"BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST" (Acts 16:31).**

Thank God for the everlasting arms of Jesus Christ, upon which the believer can rest assure. **Romans 10:11, "For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."** This Scripture doesn't mean what many people think. It doesn't mean that one who believes on Jesus will never be embarrassed or follow from afar off like Peter did. Peter denied knowing Jesus and even cursed the Savior's name, but Peter didn't lose his salvation. **Romans 10:13** is a quote from the Old Testament, from **Isaiah 28:16, "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD,**

Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." In other words, those who believe on Christ will not be disappointed. The everlasting arms are beneath each and every believer and salvation cannot be lost.

A correctly understood Gospel—The GOOD NEWS that Christ DIED on the cross for our sins, was BURIED and bodily RESURRECTED three days later, salvation by grace alone through faith alone on the basis of Christ's finished work alone—mandates eternal security. On the other hand, if one is trusting in one's works or a "commitment" to perform works or to live a certain way to be saved, then salvation cannot be assured, and the doctrine of eternal security is either negotiable or is denied.

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Psalm 37:28, "For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off."

Chapter 4 — Preservation; Not Perseverance

The Word of God teaches preservation concerning His saints, not perseverance. Here are some more Scriptures that speak concerning the preservation of the saints.

> **Luke 17:33, "Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it."**
>
> **1st Thessalonians 5:23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."**
>
> **Jude 1:1, "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called."**

Notice in **Jude 1:1** that the Christian believer is **"preserved in Jesus Christ."** The word **"preserved"** in **Jude 1:1** means "to guard from loss or injury" and to "keep an eye upon." God keeps His eye upon us continually and protects us. Hence, our salvation is safe and secure in the Lord's hands. There is no chance of losing our salvation. We are **"preserved in Jesus Christ**," that is, we have eternal life and no one can take it away from us, nor can we mess things up and lose it. Those who trust in Jesus Christ are preserved unto God's heavenly kingdom...

> **2nd Timothy 4:18, "And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."**

The word "preserve" in 2nd Timothy 4:18 means "to deliver or protect." Hence, God will make good on His promise of eternal life to those who believe on Jesus Christ. God will deliver as PROMISED. The Bible teaches that God will finish what He has started in each and every Christian...

Philippians 1:6, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

This means that salvation CANNOT be lost. The Bible teaches that God begins "a good work" in every believer at the time of salvation, and God "performs it" until the day of Jesus Christ. To say that salvation can be lost is to say that God doesn't finish what He has started in every believer.

The Bible only mentions the word "perseverance" once in relation to prayer...

Ephesians 6:18, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

The Perseverance of the Saints is a false doctrine that John Calvin popularized. The Bible teaches that each believer is PRESERVED in Christ Jesus unto God's heavenly kingdom. We do not need to put forth effort, nor live a certain type of lifestyle, to maintain our salvation. The change that genuine repentance should bring in the life of a believer has absolutely nothing to do with saving-faith itself. We are saved by God's merciful grace through faith in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. God's preserves His own; this is, He delivers us as promised unto His heavenly kingdom and we are safe in the hands of the Father. **John 10:28, "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."** Notice what Jesus said, **"they shall never perish."** This is a divine promise from the Lord which teaches Eternal Security. If we can never perish as believers, then we cannot lose our salvation.

John 10:29,30, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." Jesus said that **"no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." "No man"** includes one's self. It is impossible for anyone to lose their salvation, for God has said that **"no man"** can remove us from God's divine hand of protection, and that must include our self as well.

The Bible speaks plainly concerning salvation, **"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish" (John 10:28a).** When Jesus says, **"they shall never perish,"** He is simply saying that every born-again believer is "**preserved** **in Jesus Christ."** God watches over His children and delivers them unto eternal life as He has PROMISED. God does not require His children to persevere as part of saving-faith; no, rather, God preserves us by His mighty power, sealing us with the Holy Spirit, and

finishing the good work He hath begun in us. Perseverance places the burden of salvation upon mankind, which is sinful self-righteousness; BUT, the Word of God teaches that salvation is solely of the Lord, and God preserves each believer in Christ Jesus. We are saved by HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, i.e., the righteousness of Jesus Christ which God imputes (attributes to) our record at the time of salvation. **2nd Corinthians 5:21, "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."** Amen!

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Psalm 118:8, "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man."

Chapter 5 — The Curse of Calvinism

It is tragic that the false teachings of a man, John Calvin (1509-1564), who's been dead now for well over four hundred years is still influencing millions of people for the Devil. John Calvin was a heretic! Psalm 118:8 tells us to trust in the Lord and not men. In John 5:39 Jesus commanded for each of us to ***SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES!!!***

It is tragic that so many people today follow the heretical teachings of such men as Martin Luther, Jacob Arminius, John Calvin, the *Westminster Confession*, the Council of Trent, and so on. There is nothing taught in the Word of God about *sacraments*. The term "holy baptism" isn't found in the Scriptures, nor is the term "holy mass." These are manmade terms. Water baptism and the Lord's Supper are simply ordinances which the Lord instituted in the local New Testament church. There is no grace imparted to the believer, nor spiritual power bestowed, by being water baptized or partaking of the Lord's Supper. Also, infant baptism in unscriptural.

John Calvin taught that a believer must PERSEVERE in the faith as part of saving-faith. Tragically, the *Salvation Army* and Dr. John MacArthur, pastor of *Grace Community Church* in Sun Valley, California, are devout followers of Calvin and believe the same thing. Those who adhere to one or more teachings of John Calvin are commonly called, "Calvinists." Calvin's core teachings are often presented in the form of an acronym: TULIP:

- **T — Total Depravity of Man (Man cannot come to God of his own freewill.)**
- **U — Unconditional Election (God chooses who will be saved.)**
- **L — Limited Atonement (Jesus only died for the redeemed.)**
- **I — Irresistible Grace (If God chooses you for salvation, you will get saved.)**
- **P — Perseverance of His Saints (If saved, you'll forsake sin & continue in the faith.)**

The Word of God strongly contradicts all of Calvin's teachings. **Revelation 22:17** in the New Testament so wonderfully tells us, **"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."** Notice those words, **"whosoever will."** That means you, and me, and everyone else on earth, are invited by the Holy Spirit to take the water of life FREELY. Eternal Life is the free gift of God. Salvation is receiving; not giving. Jesus paid it all by His own blood sacrifice for our sins.

The very notion that God chooses who will or won't be saved is absurd. God NEVER chooses who will be saved, or who won't be saved. The choice is solely ours to make as individuals. In **John 5:40** Jesus said to the Jews, **"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."** Carefully notice that Jesus DIDN'T say, "Ye cannot come," no, rather, He plainly stated, **"Ye will not come."** Anyone will be saved if they come to God the Father through the Son. **John 14:6, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."** Amen!

Calvin taught the false doctrine of Limited Atonement, i.e., the teaching that Jesus didn't die for the wicked; but rather, only for those whom God in His foreknowledge knew would one day be saved. The Bible proves Calvin wrong time and time again. For example: **2nd Peter 2:1, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."** Notice the phrase, **"even denying the Lord that bought them."** Jesus bought those Christ-rejecting false prophets, which the Bible clearly states to us. Again in **1st John 2:2** we are taught, **"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."** The word "propitiation" means "to appease one's wrath." Jesus' blood sacrifice satisfied the Father's demand for justice and made salvation available to all humanity as a free gift. The Bible plainly states that Jesus appeased the wrath of God for our sins, and not for ours only, **"but also for the sins of the whole world."** Jesus died for the sins of the whole world. Amen!

God will not force anyone to get saved. In **Acts 26:28b**, after hearing the Apostle Paul present the Gospel, king Agrippa said to Paul, **"Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."** There was no irresistible grace at work. Agrippa had a choice to make, as we all do.

Now we come to the heretical teaching by Calvin of the perseverance of the Saints. Calvin taught that one who is truly saved WILL continue in the faith, as part of saving-faith, and that salvation can be lost if that person

turns away from serving Christ and goes into sin. Nothing could be further from the truth. Salvation is of the Lord; and not man. We have no part in salvation except to enter our guilty plea before God the Father, for violating God's holy Law, and then believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for forgiveness, so that Christ's precious blood can wash away our sins forever. **Colossians 1:14, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."**

I think **Romans 4:5,6** are some of the most overlooked Scriptures in the Bible, because they clearly refute the Calvinistic doctrine of perseverance, **"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works."** The Bible plainly states that a man's faith is COUNTED for righteousness. This is because Christ's righteousness is attributed to, or charged to, our record in Heaven through faith in Christ. Literally, we are saved by Christ's righteousness; and not our own self-righteousness in any way. Read carefully the words of **Romans 10:3,4, "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."** Christ in the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believeth. Amen! This blows Calvin's doctrine of *The Perseverance of the Saints* straight out of the water! We don't have to persevere to stay saved, nor can we determine if one is unsaved because they backslide and stop living for the Lord. We have no part in our own salvation except to BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ to forgive our sins. **Acts 10:43, "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."**

Notice the type of person whom Christ justifies in Romans 4:5, **"the ungodly."** Calvinists are a self-righteous bunch, thinking that they haven't lost their salvation yet because they're persevering in the faith for God. The truth is that if we all were to receive what we deserve, the ground would immediately open beneath us and swallow us into hellfire forever. David said in Psalm 32:2, **"Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."** The teachings of Calvinism essentially ignore the great Biblical doctrine of imputation, i.e., the truth that we are saved by Christ's righteousness, which the Father attributes to our heavenly record the moment we trust Jesus Christ as our Savior. Jesus took our sins upon Himself at Calvary, and by faith God places Jesus' righteousness upon our record at the time of salvation.

Followers of Calvinism claim that salvation can be lost because of sin in

one's personal life, or by turning away from living the Christian life. What they don't concede is that even the best of Christians still struggle with sin and fail on a regular basis, as did the Apostle Paul in Romans 7:14-25. The Christian life is a life of struggle with sin, of temptation, of sorrow and woe, of sadness and heartbreak. **John 16:20, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy."** Jesus said we would be sorrowful because of the sinful world we live in. Jesus said in John 15:19 that people would hate us merely for being Christians. So, even the best of Christians have it rough in this world. Those who teach that salvation can be lost have a distorted view of the Christian life. Calvinism is rooted in self-righteousness. John Calvin was of the Devil and is sadly burning in Hell this moment, because he failed to solely rest upon the blessed Savior for salvation. Calvin spent his life trying to persevere, to stay on good terms with God by his own self-righteousness; instead of resting assuredly upon the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The word "perseverance" is only mentioned one time in the entire Bible and is only speaking concerning prayer, **Ephesians 6:18, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."** Let us beware of manmade doctrines that ensnare our soul and lead us astray from the precious truths and sound doctrines of God's Word.

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James 2:10, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

Chapter 6 — Who's the Biggest Sinner?

You are! I am! We all are! It is human nature to look upon the sins and faults of others, while often overlooking our own sins. This is hypocrisy. One of the worst deceptions is overlooking our own faults. The Word of God proclaims in James 2:10 that committing even ONE SIN makes a person GUILTY in God's eyes of breaking every command in the Bible. This is a startling doctrine that is hardly touched upon in churches today.

This is why the divorce rate amongst professed Christians is equal to that of the heathen unsaved world. In filing for divorce, a person is saying: "My spouse is a bigger sinner than I am; therefore, I have a right to abandon, quit and break my marriage vows." No you don't! Divorce is a horrible sin rooted in one's own hypocritical self-righteousness. Nearly everyone who files for divorce blames their spouse. This is evil. The Bible teaches that we are all as guilty as the vilest sinner in God's eyes. This doctrine is virtually unheard of nowadays, because few preachers stress the Law of God anymore, which condemns all of us as guilty sinners before God...

> "**Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and <u>all the world may become guilty before God</u>" (Romans 3:19).**

In the eyes of men, murdering someone is obviously worse than stealing their lunch; but as far as God is concerned we are all equally lacking any righteousness of our own. We are each as dirty and rotten as the other guy. Oftentimes what people perceive as acceptable, such as homosexuality, is an abomination unto God. If we *SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES* as Jesus commanded in John 5:39, then we can only come to the conclusion that we are as sinful as the worst sinner in God's eyes and it matters not who is more guilty. We are all guilty (Romans 3:10,23). The fact of the matter is that we are all sinners deserving of punishment in Hell (Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:11-15). Although we may never commit murder or rob a bank, that does <u>not</u> make us any less guilty of being a horrible sinner in the eyes of God.

People tend to selfishly judge themselves based upon what sins they personally DON'T commit. The Bible perfectly illustrates this in Jesus' account of the Pharisee and the publican who went up to the temple to pray...

> **"Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:10-14).**

The Pharisee in Luke 18:10-14 made the grave mistake of comparing himself with other people, instead of measuring himself up against the holy Law of God. If we foolishly look at other people who commit worse sins than we do, then we naturally become self-righteousness and think we are "better" than that person. I tell you, you are as filthy and rotten as Adolf Hitler in God's eyes, and so am I...

> **"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (Isaiah 64:6).**

Would to God that Christians in churches today would stop saying, "he has sinned," or "she has sinned," and that we'd all start saying, "**we have sinned**." It is sinful pride that causes a wife to publicly criticize or divorce her husband. It is sinful pride that causes the manure spreading newsmedia to mercilessly destroy people's lives. It is sinful pride that causes self-righteous hypocrites to meddle in other people's marriages. I came to the realization one day as a believer that I am as rotten and sinful as the worst sinner. I am just as sinful as any adulterer, mass-murderer, homosexual, thief, liar or Satan worshipper. My sins are just as woeful and wrong. I have no room to condemn.

The Apostle Paul realized this great truth...

> "**This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; <u>of whom I am chief</u>" (1st Timothy 1:15).**

The Apostle Paul was a faithful missionary, who loved the Lord Jesus Christ and helped people everywhere he went. Paul suffered horribly from shipwreck, hunger, turmoil and malicious beatings from his enemies; yet he kept going for God. Paul was a mighty preacher and a strong Christian. Although Paul was arguably the greatest missionary who ever lived, he still addressed himself as the "chief of sinners." I don't know too many believers today who are anywhere near as dedicated and committed to Jesus Christ as was Paul. If a good Christian like Paul esteemed himself as the "chief of sinners," then we ought to feel the same way.

Judging Versus Condemning

We must distinguish between condemning someone for their sins versus publicly exposing them because they are a threat to society. I publicly expose abortionists (murderers), homosexuals (sex perverts) and religious deceivers (liars) through my online ministry; but I do not condemn any of them personally. I am not condemning them; God's Word condemns all of us (Romans 3:19-23). I am as rotten and sinful as the worst sinner. I am not self-righteous; I am trusting upon HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, i.e., the righteousness of Jesus Christ (2nd Corinthians 5:21). I deserve to burn in Hell and there's absolutely nothing good about me except the Lord Jesus Christ Who lives in my heart, thankfully.

If a local school has a teacher who is teaching teens how to have homosexual "fist sex," which is happening today in Massachusetts, then that evil person needs to be exposed. Godless heathens are quick to cry out, "Jesus said, '*judge not lest ye be not judged*.' " They conveniently fail to quote John 7:24 where Jesus stated, "*Judge not according to the appearance, but* ***judge righteous judgment***." So we are supposed to judge, but rightfully so.

Ephesians 5:10-11 reads, "***Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.*** *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather* ***reprove them***." The word "proving" in Ephesians 5:10 is the Greek word (*dokimazo*) and means "to test." Thus, God wants us to test everything, to judge righteously, to discern whether or not something is acceptable to Him, i.e., in agreement with His holy Word. Certainly, it is NOT acceptable to teach children that it's ok for Timmy to stick his fist in Johnny's backside as an expression of love. We are living in a sicko society in America. Ephesians 5:11 commands God-fearing believers to reprove [Greek: *elencho*, i.e., "to expose"] all works of darkness. This is not condemning; but rather, judging righteously as we are supposed to do.

Conclusion of the Matter

Would to God that more believers today would realize the extent of their wickedness in the eyes of God. We are a sorry bunch. Our only hope is the precious Lord Jesus Christ and the salvation that He freely offers to us, paid for by His own shed blood...

> "**Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; <u>But with the precious blood of Christ</u>, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1st Peter 1:18,19).**

If it weren't for the literal precious blood of Jesus Christ, we'd all be doomed to the Lake of Fire. God is a good God... "*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*" (Romans 5:8). Amen!

One day I had preached a rip-snortin', shingle-pullin', window-rattlin', hell-fire and damnation sermon to a group of about 80 people in Chicago. After the sermon I stepped outside for some fresh air. I glanced over and noticed a gentleman smoking. He felt embarrassed and said, "I'm sorry reverend for smoking in front of you." I replied, "I preach against sin from the pulpit; but away from the pulpit I'm just as much a sinner as anyone else. You're in good company friend. You need not apologize." He had wrongly esteemed that he was a bigger sinner than me; but I am the biggest sinner I know. If you want to see the biggest sinner, then just look in the mirror. You and I are as guilty of sin as anyone else. So if anyone can lose salvation, then we all lost it a long time ago. Thankfully, salvation cannot be lost. If saved, always saved.

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ETERNAL SECURITY

By David J. Stewart | March 2009

Galatians 2:16, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

Chapter 7 — The Hypocrisy of the Critics of Eternal Security

The biggest flaw in the thinking of the enemies of Eternal Security is that they fail to realize just how sinful they are themselves. They hypocritically condemn other believers who live in unrepentant sin, failing to realize that they're just as sinful in God's eyes. If salvation can be lost, then who is righteous enough to keep their own salvation? Only a self-righteous hypocrite would claim to be self-righteous enough to please God. **Isaiah 64:6** puts them to shame...

> "**But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away**."

Oh listen my friend, do you have any idea just how sinful you and I are? Please read this brief excerpt from Jonathan Edwards' famous sermon, "*SINNERS IN THE HANDS OF AN ANGRY GOD*"...

> **"The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked: his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times more abominable in his eyes, than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince; and yet it is nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment. It is to be ascribed to nothing else, that you did not go to hell the last night; that you was suffered to awake again in this world, after you closed your eyes to sleep. And there is no other reason to be given, why**

you have not dropped into hell since you arose in the morning, but that God's hand has held you up. There is no other reason to be given why you have not gone to hell, since you have sat here in the house of God, provoking his pure eyes by your sinful wicked manner of attending his solemn worship. Yea, there is nothing else that is to be given as a reason why you do not this very moment drop down into hell."

SOURCE: SINNERS IN THE HANDS OF AN ANGRY GOD! by Jonathan Edwards; preached in Enfield, Connecticut; July 8, 1741

Amen! Now with the words of Jonathan Edward's in mind, it should be obvious to you just how hypocritical the people are who teach that some believers can lose their salvation by living in sin. If that were the case, then we'd all immediately drop down into the fires of Hell beneath. The very notion that certain sins can cause a believer to lose salvation is insane. Folks, we ALL deserve to go straight to Hell, right now! I don't care how self-righteous you may think you are, you deserve to plunge without delay into the Lake of Fire. This blasts the entire *Lordship Salvation* crowd out of the water. If salvation can be lost, then we've ALL lost it a long time ago. What arrogance for anyone to claim that some believers are bigger sinners than others, and have therefore lost salvation. That's a bunch of garbage not taught anywhere in the Scriptures. We all deserve to go directly to Hell, or as they say in the board game *Monopoly*... *Go to jail. Go directly to jail. Do not pass go, do not collect $200.* Is there any among us without sin?

I thank God that my salvation is solely in the hands of my righteous Savior, Jesus Christ; and not dependent upon my own sorry, frail, insufficient, rotten and sinful self-righteousness. Critics of Eternal Security are hypocrites. They are no less sinful than the adulterous and murderous believers they condemn. They condemn other believers, whom they consider more sinful than themselves, accusing others of losing their salvation, but they're just as much dirty, rotten, hell-deserving sinners, who fail to see the sinful beam in their own eye.

Those who DON'T believe in Eternal Security have a completely different mindset towards salvation. They DON'T have the blessed peace and assurance which comes from resting upon the promises of God. Jesus is our Sabbath, upon whom we solely rest for our salvation. **Titus 1:2** speaks of the promise of eternal life, from God Who cannot lie, **"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."** Amen!

As Christians, we can KNOW that we are saved, because our salvation is not rooted in merit or works, but upon the finished work of Christ. Our salvation is based upon God's love for undeserving sinners, not upon our own self-righteousness. To say that a believer is not eternally secure in Christ, is to lower the Christian faith to the level of the woeful Islamic Muslim religion, which offers no security to it's followers. In Islam, you do your best, and hope to make it. Isn't this the same garbage that is being propagated by those who claim that there is NO security in Christ? I find it a great hypocrisy for anyone to claim to be wholly trusting the Savior for salvation, while at the same time holding to the self-righteous idea that we can mess things up if we backslide and walk into sin. If the latter be true, then our salvation is dependent upon man, as much as it is upon God. The Word of God is clear on this matter in **Jonah 2:9, "Salvation is of the LORD."**

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Ephesians 1:13, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise."

Chapter 8 — Sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise

Every born-again believer is SEALED at the time of salvation with God's Holy Spirit. The word **"sealed"** means "to stamp (with a signet or private mark) for security or preservation." Oftentimes a judge will seal court documents for decades to come, prohibiting anyone from reading them. Such is the case with court documents concerning Martin Luther King Jr., who was a Christ-rejecting Communist. In order to falsely honor King and promote a national holiday for civil rights, US Federal judge John Lewis Smith, Jr. ordered all the FBI records sealed up in the National Archives for 50 years (till 2027). King's court records are sealed, secure and preserved.

Likewise, every new believer is sealed with the Holy Spirit, making us eternally secure and preserved in God's protective hands. The Holy Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are saved. **Romans 8:16, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."** Amen! We are sealed by God the Father when we get saved. **John 6:27, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."** Notice the words, **"him hath God the Father sealed."** Every believer is sealed with the Holy Spirit at the time of salvation, safe and secure in the loving hands of the Heavenly Father.

In view of the plain teaching of the Scriptures, how ridiculous it is for anyone to question the eternal security of the believer. We are sealed by God's Holy Spirit, i.e., that Spirit of promise, the moment we place our faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins. Salvation is a matter of God keeping His promise to those who come to Him by way of His Son, Jesus Christ. **John 14:6, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John 6:37,47, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."** God the

Father PROMISES eternal life to those who believe on Jesus Christ! We repeatedly find the word **"promise"** in the Scriptures concerning eternal life. For example, **Titus 1:2, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."** Notice the word "promised."

Those critics who reject the Biblical doctrine of the Eternal Security of the believer are calling God a liar, because they have not taken God at His PROMISE. God PROMISES eternal life to anyone who acknowledges their guilt of sin and comes to the Lord Jesus Christ for forgiveness. God then seals that person with the Spirit of PROMISE. The Holy Spirit Who lives within the body of every believer then testifies **"with our spirit, that we are THE CHILDREN OF GOD" (Romans 8:16).** No amount of sin, nor backsliding, nor anything else can cause us to lose our salvation, because God PROMISED eternal life to anyone who believes on the Lord. Salvation is a matter of God keeping His PROMISE; and not how we live or think as believers. Salvation is receiving; not giving. Our part is only to believe, God does the rest. God gives us His Holy Spirit of PROMISE the moment we receive Jesus Christ as our Savior, and the Holy Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are God's child. If salvation can be lost, and then gained, and then lost again, and then gained, then salvation would not be a matter of God keeping His PROMISES to us; but, rather, of how well we are doing in our Christian life, which is self-righteousness. No my friend, salvation cannot be lost, because God has PROMISED eternal life to him who believes.

Ephesians 4:30, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." The Bible teaches that the believer is **"SEALED WITH THAT HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE" (Ephesians 1:13).** Jesus PROMISED that the Holy Spirit would come once He was departed from the earth. **John 14:26, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."** Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would come, and so it is. This is why the Bible refers the the Holy Ghost as "that Spirit of promise." God keeps His promises. This is why we are encouraged in **Romans 10:11, "For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."** Many people misinterpret this Scripture to mean that one who is embarrassed of Christ is not saved. No, no, no! That is not what this verse means at all. Look at the Apostle Peter, who cursed the name of Jesus and denied any affiliation with the Savior. Yet, later Peter wept bitter tears of sorrow and got right with God. **Romans 10:11** means that Jesus won't fail anyone who believes on Him. This is another wonderful Scripture that exposes the heresy that salvation can be lost. The Bible PROMISES, and I love that word "promise," that whosoever believes on Jesus Christ will not be disappointed

whatsoever!

Every believer is given the Holy Spirit of God at the time of salvation, which is God's seal upon us, showing that we belong to God and are eternally secure and preserved in Christ Jesus. Our salvation is secure in the PROMISES of God.

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2nd Corinthians 1:22, "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."

Chapter 9 — The Earnest of the Spirit

When a person trust's Jesus Christ to get saved, the Holy Spirit immediately indwells that person, i.e., God the Father and God the Son come to live within that person in the form of God the Holy Spirit. Amen!

The Bible teaches in **2nd Corinthians 1:22** that God not only seals us with His Holy Spirit at the time of salvation, but He also gives us the Holy Spirit as proof of God's downpayment on us! **2nd Corinthians 1:22** reads**, "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."** The word "earnest" means "a pledge, i.e. part of the purchase-money or property given in advance as security for the rest."

God has given each believer the Holy Spirit as a PLEDGE, or PROMISE, that He will make good on His PROMISE to give us everlasting life and joy and a home in Heaven that the Lord Himself is preparing. This is such a wonderful truth! God has given us the Holy Spirit, as believers, to testify that we are God's children, and as a pledge that He is coming back to get us, that where He is, there may we be also. **John 14:1-3, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."** What a wonderful Savior! God didn't just make a bunch of empty promises to us, He placed His Spirit into our hearts the day we were saved as evidence that He will make good on all His promises to us. Oh, how God wants to bless us and give us good things as His children! For now, Jesus said we would suffer tribulation in the world, and be hated by the world for Christ's sake, and suffer persecution; but there's a blessed home beyond the sunset where our Lord is preparing a special place for us to live.

It is common practice for shoppers to buy something on a lay-away plan. They don't have the money upfront, so they leave a downpayment instead,

evidence that they'll be back to claim the item at a later time. Likewise, God has given us His Holy Spirit as evidence that He's coming back to get us. Sometimes when a boyfriend or girlfriend is going away for a long time, there is apprehension and worry that their friend may not come back, so the departing one will leave something of sentimental value or something that is dear to them as assurance that they will come back. The same is true with the Heavenly Father, Who has given to us His Holy Spirit as assurance that He is coming back again to receive us as His own. This is what **2nd Corinthians 1:22** means when it says that God has given us **"the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."** Amen!

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Romans 4:6, "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works."

Chapter 10 — The Imputed Righteousness of Jesus Christ

What in the world does that big word mean . . . *IMPUTETH*? The word "impute" means "to pass to one's account, to count over" It means that Jesus places His righteousness upon our record when we trust upon Him for salvation. Romans chapter four speaks concerning Abraham, "*For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was* ***COUNTED UNTO HIM*** *for righteousness*" (Romans 4:3). What a beautiful truth! Abraham was not saved by good works; but rather, he believed God and was saved by Christ's righteousness. Christ's perfection was imputed (placed) on Abraham's record in Heaven. God the Father viewed Abraham thereafter as having the righteousness of Christ. What a Savior!

Abraham believed God concerning the coming Messiah which was to save His people from their sins . . . "*And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness*" (Genesis 15:6). Why was Abraham able to simply believe God in place of merit or good works? It's simply because Jesus paid the price for mankind's sins. You see, Abraham could NOT please God in his own self-righteousness, nor can we (Ephesians 2:8,9; Romans 10:3,4; Titus 3:5). No matter how much good we may do here on earth, our sins are still recorded in Heaven. Our sins must be dealt with. This is why Jesus came to earth to paid the price for our sins with His own precious blood . . . "*Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;* ***But with the precious blood of Christ****, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*" All mankind is corrupt and destitute of God. Even in our sincerest efforts, humanity is tarnished with the curse of sin and rebellion. We need HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, i.e., the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. We are saved by Jesus' righteousness through faith.

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness"

(Romans 4:5).

We read in Romans 4:8, "*Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not* ***IMPUTE*** *sin.*" Not only was Christ's righteousness imputed (counted) to Abraham's record, but Abraham's sinful record was imputed to Christ. Literally, Jesus became as sin for us and died a sinner's death . . . "*For* ***HE HATH MADE HIM TO BE SIN FOR US, WHO KNEW NO SIN****; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*" (2nd Corinthians 5:21). Amen!

We read concerning Abraham . . .

"And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was IMPUTED to him; <u>But for us also</u>, to whom it shall be IMPUTED, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Romans 4:22-24).

This is a beautiful passage of Scripture, teaching that God is willing to IMPUTE Christ's righteousness to us as well, just as He did to Abraham, if we'll simply believe on the Lord... "*To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*"

These Scriptures were written for us, that we might also have Christ's righteousness imputed to our record, and our sins imputed to Christ's record. He who knew no sin, became as sin, that we who knew no righteousness could be made the righteousness of God in Christ (2nd Corinthians 5:21). What a wonderful truth! To think that Jesus would actually bear our sins upon Himself and sacrifice His precious blood for our sins—we are not worthy. Thankfully, God looked beyond our faults through His love and saw our need . . . "*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*"

I cannot express in Words how much I thank the Lord for what He has done for a sinful worm like me. Do you realize all that you will miss if you reject Christ as your Savior? Eternal life is a free gift (Romans 5:15; 6:23), which anyone may have simply by acknowledging their guilt of sin and believing on the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness . . . "*To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins*" (Acts 10:43). It is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ that we are saved, so that God the Father may view us as having the righteousness of Christ which is imputed unto us at salvation . . .

"Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God IMPUTETH righteousness without works" (Romans 4:6).

"*And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was* ***IMPUTED*** *unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God*" (James 2:23). Would you like to be the friend of God? It all begins when you say yes to Jesus and let Him become your Savior. Jesus earnestly wants to impute your sin to His record and impute His righteousness to your record. All you must do to be saved is admit your guilty condition before God for violating His holy Law (Romans 3:19), and then trust upon the Son of God to wash away your sins with His shed blood. Admit you're a sinner deserving of Hell. Turn to Christ now in faith and trust Him to forgive your sins and cleanse you.

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John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Chapter 11 — Ye Must Be Born Again!

In John chapter three, Jesus told Nicodemus that unless he became born-again he could not enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Nicodemus didn't understand and asked Jesus in **John 3:4, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?"** Jesus replied in **John 3:6,7, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."** Just as a person is born ONCE physically, so must a person be born ONCE, and only once, spiritually. It is IMPOSSIBLE to be born twice, whether physically or spiritually. Once a baby is born into the world, time cannot be erased. Likewise, when a person is born-again spiritually, i.e., born anew into God's family, that birth cannot be undone or redone.

Jesus did not say to be born again and again and again. No, rather, He just told Nicodemus, **"Ye must be born again."** The saying is true, "If you're born twice, you die once; if you're born once, you die twice." That is, if you've been born-again into God's family, then you won't die the Second Death in the Lake of Fire. **Revelation 21:8, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."** Notice that the Bible mentions the **"second death."** Thankfully, because of the blood sacrifice of our great Savior, Jesus Christ, we don't have to die the Second Death. But we MUST be born-again if we are to escape such horrid damnation. **1st Peter 1:23, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."** The Word of God is the precious Seed by which we are born-again. Amen!

John 11:25, "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." There are hundreds of New Testament references which tell us to

believe on Jesus as the Christ for salvation, but none of them give indication or lead us to think that salvation can be lost, or that a person must be born-again more than once. The spiritual birth is as irreversible as the physical birth. The great Biblical doctrine of being BORN-AGAIN is solid proof against the notion that a person can lose salvation. It is absurd to think that an earthly mother could give birth to the same child twice. It is just as strange and absurd to claim that a born-again child of God could ever be unborn and be required to start all over again in the family of God.

Religion wants to fit us with glasses, but the Lord wants to open our eyes! Thank God for the truth of His precious Word, which is a lamp unto our feet. **Psalm 119:105, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."** America's churches influence the world, so if Satan can corrupt our churches here at home, then he can corrupt the world. The United States sends out more missionaries than any other nation. Sadly, there is MUCH heresy and false teaching circulating on the radio, television and in our churches nowadays concerning what a person must do to be saved.

What Exactly is "THE GOSPEL," by Which We Are Saved Through Faith?

The word "Gospel" means "Good News" or "Glad Tidings." There is no need to guess what the "Gospel" is because the Bible plainly tells us. The "Gospel" is the *Good News* of Christ's DEATH on the cross for our sins, His BURIAL and bodily RESURRECTION three days later:

> **1st Corinthians 15:1-4, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."**

We are saved by BELIEVING "the Gospel," which is the power of God unto salvation. **Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." John 6:28-29, "Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them,**

This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.” It is that simple to be saved. If you admit that you are a needy sinner in God's sight, and you receive Christ's sacrifice on the cross as payment for your sins, believing that He was buried and bodily resurrected three days later, YOU ARE IMMEDIATELY, SECURELY AND FOREVER SAVED!!!

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ETERNAL SECURITY

By David J. Stewart | March 2009

1st Corinthians 5:5, "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

Chapter 12 — The Vilest Sinner at the Church of Corinth

The Apostle Paul, in his first letter to the Church of Corinth, reprimands them for allowing the sin of fornication in the church. Paul states that fornication is "commonly" reported among them. A literal translation of the TEXTUS RECEPTUS Greek in 1st Corinthians 5:1 reads, "Everywhere it is heard that fornication is among you..." (SOURCE: *THE INTERLINEAR BIBLE*, Jay P. Green, Sr.; *Sovereign Grace Publishers*, ISBN: 1-878442-81-3). This carnal church was KNOWN as a house of sin. Yet in 1st Corinthians 3:1 the Apostle Paul called them... BABES IN CHRIST! This is Scriptural proof that salvation cannot be lost.

The Apostle Paul mentions one man in particular in the church, who had taken fornication to the next level, by having immoral relations with his stepmother. Concerning this backslidden man, Paul states in **1st Corinthians 5:5, "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."** This man was so sinful that the Apostle Paul asked the church to boot him out, **"But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1st Corinthians 5:13).** This man was a fornicator, shamelessly living in open sin in the house of God; YET, Paul said that this man's spirit would *BE SAVED IN THE DAY OF THE LORD JESUS* (i.e., when Jesus returns at the Rapture for the saints). In other words Paul was saying, "Look, this man is living in open sin in the church, and you need to do something about it. If he doesn't repent, boot him out and let the Devil have him, because he is corrupting the church. Although Satan will destroy his flesh, God will save his spirit because he is still a true believer."

Argue as opponents of Eternal Security may, the Word of God states in no uncertain terms, **"To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of**

the Lord Jesus" (1st Corinthians 5:5). This is clear proof that a believer can live like the heathen world, and still go to Heaven. That is not to say that it's acceptable to live in sin, it's certainly not; BUT, as 1st Corinthians 5:5 states, a horribly backslidden believer can be given over ***"unto Satan for the destruction of the FLESH*."** Such a person will shed many tears in Heaven, but they will be in Heaven. You can't argue with the Scriptures, some believers do live a life of sin. **1st Corinthians 3:15, "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."** Many believers will enter into Heaven with nothing to show for their life for God.

In **Romans 12:1**, the Apostle Paul states, **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."** Paul is asking these BELIEVERS to make a commitment to God. They are ALREADY saved, but they have NOT yielded themselves to God yet. When a baby is born into this world physically, everything is *new* to him/her. The same is true about being born-again, everything becomes *new*, a whole *new* world of understanding is opened (2nd Corinthians 5:17). Now the growing process has begun, and God's Holy Spirit will nurture that believer, through the Word of God and preaching (1st Peter 2:2; Titus 1:3). The fact that the Apostle Paul beseeched (i.e., begged) the believers at Rome to surrender to Christ is further Scriptural evidence that believers do not lose salvation. The believers at Rome were not yielded to God's will for their lives.

The heresy that salvation can be lost attempts to force people to live a righteous life in order to keep their salvation. In sharp contrast, **Romans 4:5** simply states, **"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."** Again, we are saved by HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, i.e., the righteousness of Jesus Christ which is obtained through faith alone in His blood sacrifice. **Romans 3:25, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."** Notice the words, **"through faith in his blood."** We are redeemed by the physical, precious blood of Jesus Christ.

Proverb 24:16 states, **"For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief."** Even the best of Christians stumble and commit sin. We are all sinners incapable of living beyond sin. The Apostle Paul, who is arguably the greatest missionary who ever lived, battled with sin in his life. **Romans 7:15,24, "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"** Every honest believer can relate to the words of

Paul. This is not to say that any believer has God's permission to sin, we do not. It just means that all believers will be vulnerable to sinful temptation as long as we are in the body of this flesh. Notice in **Romans 7:24** that Paul speaks of **"the body of this death."**

According to **1st Corinthians 5:5**, the vilest sinner at the church of Corinth was saved. This is conclusive evidence that a believer cannot lose salvation. If saved, always saved.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." —John 3:16

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2nd Corinthians 5:10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Chapter 13 — The Judgment Seat of Christ

The fact that the Bible teaches two separate judgments is proof that believers do not lose salvation. There are two major judgments mentioned in the New Testament, one for the unsaved, and another for the saved. We are told in **Revelation 20:11-15, "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."** This event is the *Great White Throne of Judgment*. This will be the final judgment for the unsaved. That is, for all those who have died in their sins throughout history without Christ as Savior. This will be a criminal court for unbelievers, who will be sentenced to the Lake of Fire forever to pay for their own sins, because they rejected Jesus Christ.

The other major judgment will be *The Judgment Seat of Christ*, and is only for believers. **II Corinthians 5:10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."** This will be a civil court for all believers, many of whom won't receive any rewards and will have nothing to show for their time on earth.

"At the judgment seat of Christ God's anger is not expressed against any individual who has thoroughly

repented of his sins, confessed them and forsaken them. But God's judgment on the sin itself may continue where there is no judgment against the individual as such. It seems to me that we need to make a distinction between the proper anger and wrath of God against one who goes on unrepentant in sin, and God's proper wise judgment against the sin itself even when the sinner has been reconciled completely and forgiven."

—Dr. John R. Rice, from his book*, Dr. Rice, Here's My Question*.

I Corinthians 3:15, "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." Notice that every believer will give account to Christ for the good and bad **"done in his body,"** that is, while hear on earth in this fleshly tabernacle. **II Corinthians 5:1, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."** This fleshly body is only a temporary dwelling place of our spirit, which when we die will enter into eternity.

"Our salvation was settled by our acceptance of Jesus, but now we are to be judged for our works and service. Paul tells us that every one of us shall give an account of himself to God. No Christian will escape; therefore, the apostle reminds us that we are not to waste our time judging our brethren, for the time of their judgment is coming when they must stand before the judgment seat of Christ."

—Dr. Lee Roberson, Chapter 2, *Some Golden Daybreak.*

Oh, how the tears will flow on Judgment Day, when each believer will be required to give account to God for the bad done in the body. And thankfully, there will be joy for the good we have done for the Lord's sake and the Gospel's.

The very fact that there is going to be a separate judgment exclusively for

born-again believers is solid Biblical evidence that salvation cannot be lost. If salvation could be lost because of riotous living or departing from the faith, then there would be no need for a separate judgment just for Christians. The fact that **I Corinthians 3:15** tells us that some believers will receive no rewards and be **"saved; yet so as by fire,"** shows us that even the worst of Christian believers are still saved and go to Heaven. The Bible tells us these believers barely escaped the fires of Hell, **"saved; yet so as by fire."**

The vilest convicted criminal on death row will be abundantly pardoned by God, if he'll acknowledge his guilt of sin for violating God's Law, and come for forgiveness by way of the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ. **Isaiah 55:7, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."** Notice that the Bible says for the wicked to forsake his **"way,"** not sins, his **"thoughts,"** not lifestyle. A changed life is the fruit of genuine repentance of sins, and not a prerequisite to saving faith. That is, we forsake our sins because we are saved; not in order to get saved. Biblical repentance means owning before God that I am as vile a sinner as He has declared me to be in His Word.

The Bible speaks of numerous future judgments, but the two main judgments will be the *Judgment Seat of Christ* and the *Great White Throne of Judgment*. The fact that Christians will stand in court before God at a separate judgment is irrefutable evidence that every believer has Eternal Security, for if salvation could be lost because of sin there wouldn't be a need for a separate judgment for Christians. If saved, always saved.

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Proverb 24:16, "For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief."

Chapter 14 — A Just Man Falleth Seven Times

Christians at best are people, and people at best are sinners. No one can live above sin all the time. If we could, we would be sinless like Christ. Only Jesus is without sin. **II Corinthians 5:21, "For He** [God the Father] **hath made Him** [God the Son] **to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."** Thankfully, God will one day replace this old corruptible body with an incorruptible body. **I Corinthians 15:52,53, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."** Amen! What a day that will be. But until that glorious day, we will always be at war with the flesh. **I Peter 2:11, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul."** The Bible calls fleshly lusts **"a war against the soul."** A war is won fighting one battle at a time.

King David was called a man after God's own heart in **I Samuel 13:14b, "The LORD hath sought Him a man after His own heart."** Tragically, David coveted Uriah's wife, Bath-sheba, committed adultery with her, impregnated her, and then murdered her husband to hide the sin (II Samuel 11:1-17). What a horrible king! How could such a rotten person be a man after God's own heart? It just proves that even the best of Christians mess up big sometimes. Every believer struggles with the sinful flesh on a daily basis. David was a man after God's own heart because David loved God's Word. **Psalm 119:140, "Thy word is very pure: therefore Thy servant loveth it."** Yet, David ruined his life because of sin. His reputation was ruined. His friends and own family turned against him. He lost his throne for a time and his beloved son Absalom was executed. David's first child by Bath-sheba died. David paid dearly for his sins. In **Psalm 51:3,4,12,** we read David's prayer of repentance unto God, **"For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before**

me. Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight: that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free Spirit." Notice that David did not ask God to save him again; but rather, to restore the **"joy"** of salvation. Also notice that David calls it **"Thy salvation."** Salvation belongs to God alone, that is His department. Our part is to BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST (Acts 16:31).

No believer has God's permission to sin. **Romans 3:31** plainly states, **"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."** And again in **Romans 6:15, "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid."** These Scriptures clearly teach that believers are no longer under the curse of the Law; but rather, are under God's saving grace by faith in Christ Jesus. We are under grace and salvation is completely in God's hands. Nevertheless, some believers do choose to live in sin, as witnessed in the lives of many of God's men in the Bible. Noah got drunk (Genesis 9:21). Samson had sex with a prostitute (Judges 16:1). Abraham and Sara doubted God, laughing at His promise (Genesis 17:16,17). Jeremiah quit preaching God's Word (Jeremiah 20:9). Isaiah had unclean lips (Isaiah 6:5). Jonah fled from God's will (Jonah 1:10). Peter cursed the name of Jesus and denied knowing Him (Mark 14:71). The Apostle Paul said he struggled with sin continually (Romans 7:14-25). These are just a handful of examples of believer's who struggled with sin in their lives.

Proverb 24:16 states, **"For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief."** Everyone fails at times when it comes to living right. Even the most mature of Christians mess up. If we were perfect we wouldn't need a Savior. Yet, there is a vast difference between the heart's attitude of the righteous versus the wicked. Many people don't even try to live right anymore. The nicknaming of Las Vegas to the hideous "SIN CITY" is evidence of this. What a mockery of God! I can assure you that what HAPPENS in Vegas is recorded in Heaven! God will not be mocked. **Galatians 6:7, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."** It is no trifle matter with God when men live in sin, defying the Word of God, indulging in that which God calls abominations.

Here are three Scriptural principles to help us live right for God:

1. **Psalm 119:11, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."** This is reading, studying and memorizing the Scriptures. Remember, sin is the breaking of God's Laws. All sin is against God.

2. **Mark 14:38, "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak."** Prayer is asking. We need to continually pray about everything, trusting upon the Lord through prayer.

3. **Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave himself for me."** God doesn't merely want to help us live the Christian life; but rather, to live the Christian life through us.

A genuine born-again believer cannot live in sin without being convicted by God's Holy Spirit. **Hebrews 12:7,8, "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."** The Bible teaches that a true believer will be chastened (disciplined) by God. A person who does not have the Holy Spirit living within their body is not saved. **Romans 8:9b, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."** It is God's Spirit that causes the believer to desire to please God, to get back up when we sin and try to do better, to ask God to lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. The unsaved person doesn't have God's Spirit living within them, and doesn't care about living right. The wicked parade their sins publicly and defend their wickedness as being acceptable and moral, which it certainly is not. Most people who claim to be Christians nowadays are not. Most people have churchianity without Christianity. Many people think that attending Catholic mass will get them to Heaven, but Hell will be their home if they don't become born-again as Jesus commanded in **John 3:3, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."** Many arrogant religious people will be horrified one day when they are cast into the Lake of Fire forever. In **John 10:35c** Jesus warned, **"The Scripture cannot be broken."**

The Bible openly declares that a just man, i.e., a saved man, stumbles seven times; yet riseth again. The number seven in the Bible represents God's perfection. Hence, a righteous man spends his entire life trying to live for God, while messing up along the way, and continually getting back up because he desires to please the Lord. This is exactly what Paul said in **Romans 7:15, "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I."** The wicked are not so, but quit, and don't even try to please God. That's what Proverbs 24:16 means. The wicked person couldn't care less about pleasing God with their life. While they indulge in vile sins, they condemn the believer who stumbles even once into sin.

It is important to make a distinction between the believer who falls seven times, yet rises up again because they love Jesus; versus the unbeliever who has no desire to live right because they've never experienced genuine Biblical repentance concerning their sins. This is vastly different than losing one's salvation, which is IMPOSSIBLE. The fact that God said a just man falls down repeatedly evidences that salvation cannot be lost. Christians do sin, sometimes horribly so, but the evidence of their salvation is that godly sorrow worketh repentance, and they will hopefully, eventually, get back up for God. Yet, Paul clearly stated in **I Corinthians 5:5** that a saved man can be turned over **"unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."** Self-righteous religious people need to stop condemning those who they feel are more sinful than themselves, for they are just as sinful according to **James 2:10, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."** A hypocrite is someone who views another person as being a bigger sinner than them self. We're all a bunch of dirty, rotten, hell-deserving sinners.

When a backslidden believer gets right with God, that doesn't mean they're getting saved again, it just means they're getting right with their Heavenly Father. Contrary to what Pentecostals teach, king David DIDN'T lose his salvation when he sinned with Bath-sheba and murdered her husband. There is absolutely no Scriptural evidence to support the claim of Pentecostals that David lost salvation. The Bible says, **"A just man falleth seven times."** You can't rise up if you don't fall. Although sin is never acceptable to God, struggling with sin is an inherent part of the Christian life, because our flesh continually wars against the Spirit of God living within our body.

Here are some precious words from **Psalm 103:8-14, "The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will He keep his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust."** What a beautiful passage of Scripture! What a wonderful God! Our Lord knows them that fear Him and He remembers that we are dust. How ridiculous is it for anyone to teach that God takes away the birthright of His own children, kicking them out of the family of God because of sin in their life. **"For a just man falleth seven times."** The Bible says that fallen man **"riseth up again,"** it doesn't say he gets saved again. The second birth cannot be undone. If saved, always saved.

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By David J. Stewart | March 2009

Jonah 2:9, "Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly... Salvation is of the LORD."

Chapter 15 — Salvation is of the Lord

I was reading the Old Testament Book of Jonah the other day and stumbled across a truth that I never saw before. We often hear the Biblical story about Jonah and the Whale; but I've never heard anyone address the prayer which Jonah cried out from the whale's belly.

Some critics of the *King James Bible* has quarreled over the word "whale" in the Bible. Matthew 12:40 in the *New King James Version* (NKJV) and the *New International Version* (NIV) errantly change "whale" to "fish." The Greek word used in Matthew 12:40 is ketos. The scientific study of whales just happens to be - CETOLOGY - from the Greek ketos for whale and logos for study! The scientific name for whales just happens to be - CETACEANS - from the Greek ketos for whale! So "whale" is the correct translation, which the King James translators faithfully preserved.

Jonah's Desperate Prayer from the Whale's Belly

Here is what Jonah prayed to God from the inside of the whale's belly…

"Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of

the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God. When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. **They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD.** And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land." —Jonah 2:1-10

Jonah said something remarkable in his prayer to God. Jonah stated that people who trust in "lying vanities" for their salvation literally "forsake their own mercy." That is to say, they forfeit the free gift of eternal life which God in His loving mercy has made available to all mankind through the sacrifice of His only begotten Son. This would be equivalent to the Apostle Paul's statement in Galatians 5:4 … "Ye are fallen from grace." There is ONLY one way to Heaven and that is through the precious redeeming blood of the Lord Jesus Christ (1st Peter 1:18,19). Anyone who tries to merit Heaven some "other way" has fallen from the saving grace of God, and has forsaken the mercy which God has bestowed upon them through the gift of eternal life found only in Christ Jesus (Acts 4:10-12; John 10:1,9).

God's Merciful Gift of Eternal Life Versus the Lying Vanities of a False Gospel

As I read Jonah's plea to God, I couldn't help but immediately think of all the religious people in the world today who trust in "lying vanities" to get them to Heaven. They have forsaken the very mercy that God has bestowed upon them through His precious Son, Jesus Christ. Therefore, the wrath of God abideth upon them (John 3:36).

Jonah knew that "SALVATION IS OF THE LORD" and pondered over it in the whale's belly. I find it very interesting that Jonah was thinking about the merciful gift of God, and of those who trust in "lying vanities" which lead to Hellfire. You see, when Jonah was fleeing from God he was only thinking about himself; but now that Jonah is in woe and desperation, he is thinking about what is important to God—SOULWINNING!!! I believe Jonah was thinking about the unsaved inhabitants of Nineveh (where God had told him to go preach the Gospel). Jonah promised God to obey His will if his

life was spared. God caused the whale to spew Jonah forth on dry ground. Interestingly, Jonah made a 3-day journey in just ONE DAY. Jonah ran all the way to Nineveh after God delivered him from being entangled in weeds in the whale's belly in the depths of the sea. That's quite a testimony.

Many religious people today have a false sense of peace, like the calm in the eye of a hurricane, because they've been lied to by some unholy priest or arrogant minister. Death and destruction await them after the calm is gone, i.e., when they enter into eternity in their sins without the Lord. The most dangerous thing you'll ever do is trust what men say. You'd better do what Jesus commanded in John 5:39… **SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES!!!** You'll never go wrong listening to the Word of God.

The Bible is filled with warnings about listening to people…

> **"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man." —Psalm 118:8**
>
> **"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." —Proverb 16:25**
>
> **"Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit." —Jeremiah 7:8**
>
> **"Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD." —Jeremiah 17:5**
>
> **"God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged." —Romans 3:4**
>
> **"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." —Matthew 15:8,9**

Jonah knew that **SALVATION IS OF THE LORD**, and that those who trust in "lying vanities" are traveling on a highway to Hell. Phooey on what El Papa over in Rome says. Phooey on what your priest says (who's saturated with sins himself). Phooey on that Lutheran minister who arrogantly and falsely claims to have power to forgive your sins—NO HE DOESN'T. The only One Who can forgive anyone's sins has nail-scared hands and feet—Jesus Christ. Believe on Him!!!

What Will it Take?

Jonah was your typical person who forgets about God until tragedy strikes. It's sad, but true, that most of us don't think about what pleases God until we're in the back of an ambulance or in a dangerous situation. Whereas Jonah was stubbornly fleeing from the will of God before; now he is in the morbid belly of a whale facing imminent death, crying out in repentance for God to deliver him. Whereas Jonah wasn't concerned about fulfilling the will of God just days earlier; now he is desperately desiring to do God's will and preach the Gospel to lost sinners who trust in "lying vanities."

What will it take for us to surrender our lives to do God's will? Why does God always have to send a whale to devour us, fiery serpents to bite us (Numbers 21:6), an evil spirit to afflict us (1st Samuel 16:14) or a thorn in the flesh to humble us (2nd Corinthians 12:7). Mankind is sinfully proud and stubborn. Deuteronomy 6:12 warns, "***Then beware lest thou forget the LORD****, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage*." It is so easy to become ungrateful for all the wonderful things that God has done for us. So often as believers we forget about the very God Who brought us forth out of darkness (bondage to sin) and gave to us new life in Jesus Christ.

We Are Saved by Believing THE GOSPEL

The Bible teaches that we are saved by believing THE GOSPEL. What exactly is "THE GOSPEL"? The word "Gospel" means "Good News" or "Glad Tidings." There is no need to guess what the "Gospel" is because the Bible plainly tells us. The "Gospel" is the *Good News* of Christ's DEATH on the cross for our sins, His BURIAL and bodily RESURRECTION three days later:

> **1st Corinthians 15:1-4, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."**

We are saved by BELIEVING "the Gospel," which is the power of God unto salvation. **Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every**

one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." John 6:28-29, "Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." It is that simple to be saved. If you admit that you are a needy sinner in God's sight, and you receive Christ's sacrifice on the cross as payment for your sins, believing that He was buried and bodily resurrected three days later, YOU ARE IMMEDIATELY, SECURELY AND FOREVER SAVED!!!

Jonah said that he would sacrifice unto the Lord with "a voice of thanksgiving." Mankind has no part in salvation other than to receive it, by submitting to God's righteousness, through faith in Christ Jesus. You don't even have to "ask" God to forgive your sins. That is correct! Jesus has already paid for everyone's sins with His own precious blood (1st Peter 1:18-19). Forgiveness of sins is a free gift. Eternal life is a free gift. All you need to do, to be saved, is BELIEVE the *Good News* of the Gospel and those gifts are yours immediately and forever!!! It is receiving, not achieving! Getting saved is a TAKE proposition, not a GIVE proposition. We have zero righteousness of our own. Even our own self-perceived goodness is "filthy rags" in the sight of almighty God (Isaiah 64:6). The very reason why God sent His only begotten Son, to pay the price for our sins on the cross at Calvary, is because we cannot save ourselves. If there are any sins at all on our eternal record, no amount of good can expunge them. Only the blood of Jesus can cleanse our sins away forever (1st John 1:7; Revelation 1:5; 7:14). That is why 1st Corinthians 6:11 says, "BUT YE ARE WASHED"!!!

Jonah had a spirit of thanksgiving because he knew that salvation is based upon GOD'S MERCY and not upon man's own self-righteousness, nor any other "lying vanities." Salvation is of the Lord Jesus Christ. We just take it and say, "Thank you."

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